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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Rev. Don Duncan, Senior Chaplain of Oklahoma Jail & Prison Ministries and Chaplain of the Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Father, as we pause to seek Your divine guidance, I pray for Your presence, wisdom, and divine protection to be bestowed upon these Senators, their families, their staffs, and all those who have committed their lives in service to our country. I pray Your guidance through eternal principles in all discussions and final decisions. I pray for that which is honorable both in Your sight and in the heart of each citizen. When a conclusion is reached, may peace abide throughout this Chamber and throughout this land.

We pray this through the Name of Jesus. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable TOM UDALL led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, June 16, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following any leader remarks, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 782, which is the Economic Development Revitalization Act, with 4 hours of debate on the Feinstein and McCain amendments. At about 2 p.m., there will be two rollover votes in relation to the Feinstein and McCain amendments. Each amendment will have a 60-vote threshold.

OIL SUBSIDIES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am happy to see the Republicans opening up to what Democrats have been saying all along—that cutting wasteful subsidies to Big Oil should be on the table if we are going to reduce the deficit. Yesterday, my friend, the senior Senator from Tennessee, said he would consider ending taxpayer subsidies for oil companies making record profits. I congratulate my friend, the senior Senator from Tennessee. Democrats agree. Handouts such as these to companies that made \$36 billion in the first quarter of this year alone must be part of the discussion if we are going to get our fiscal house in order.

As we decide where to cut, we will need to make some tough choices, but not every choice has to be difficult. If we are serious about reducing spending, ending tens of billions in taxpayer giveaways to big oil companies shouldn't be one of the difficult decisions we have to make.

When the other side says the alternative is to end Medicare, slash Medicaid, and put millions of seniors at risk, the choice is that much clearer. We cannot take with one hand from those who can least afford it and give with the other hand to those who can. Before we end Medicare as we know it or eliminate Medicaid funding for nursing homes, as the Republicans have proposed, we should cut wasteful spending. During the course of a year, one in five Americans will be on Medicaid. The cuts the Republicans propose will affect real people—the elderly man in the nursing home, for example; the child missing her yearly checkup, as an example; the pregnant woman, as an example, whose baby depends on proper prenatal care; or the person with a disability, for example, who is able to live alone thanks to the helping hand Medicaid provides. These cuts will affect everyone else too. Cutting Medicaid simply shifts costs; it doesn't lower costs. Each patient who doesn't get the care he or she needs from a doctor today will get it tomorrow at three times the price in an emergency room, and we will all foot that bill.

The American people have spoken loudly and clearly. They do not want to balance the budget on the backs of seniors, children, or the disabled. I am glad to see at least one of my Republican colleagues courageously breaking from the pack.

Mr. President, would the Chair now announce whatever the business of the day is.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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